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## NEW EXPOSITION OF THE SCIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE.

Translated from the German of J. G. FICHTE by A. E. KROEGER.

### INTRODUCTION.

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### Part I.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SCIENCE OF KNOWLEDGE.

- § 1. *Preliminary Description of Knowledge by its Construction.*

This description is called preliminary, not because it will exhaust the conception of knowledge, but merely because it will enable us to point out those of its characteristics which are necessary to be known for our present purpose. The

question, therefore, which we might be interrupted with at the beginning—of what knowledge are you speaking? and what meaning do you attach to this word?—is not here in place. We use the term, referred to, in no other sense than will be explained directly, and mean no more by it than will appear from the following:

Construct a certain angle! we should say to the reader, if we were conversing with him. Now close the angle, thus constructed, with a third straight line. Do you presume that the angle could have been closed with one or more other lines—that is to say, longer or shorter ones, than the one you have drawn to close it? If the reader replies, as we expect him to do, that he presumes no such thing, we shall further ask him whether he considers this to be merely his *opinion*, his temporary judgment on the matter, subject to a future rectification; or whether he believes himself to *know* it, to know it as quite sure and certain. If he replies affirmatively to this question, as we also expect him to do, we shall again ask him, whether it is his opinion that the case mentioned is applicable only to that particular angle, which he happened to construct in that particular manner, and to those particular lines, forming the angle, which also happened to be just such particular lines; and whether other possible angles, enclosed by other possible lines, might not be formed so as to have their two sides united by more straight lines than one? We shall furthermore ask him, after he has answered the foregoing, whether he believes that this fact appears in this particular light only to him, individually, or whether he believes that all rational Beings, who but understand his words, must necessarily partake of his conviction in the matter; and lastly, whether he simply pretends to have an opinion on these matters, or whether he decidedly believes himself to *know* them. If he replies, as we expect him to do—for if only one of his answers should be contrary to our supposition, we should at once be compelled to forego further discussion with him until his state of mind had undergone a change; why? he alone can understand who has answered these questions correctly;—if he replies, that not one of all the infinite variety of possible angles, formed by any of the infinite number of possible lines, can be closed by more than one possible third line—that every rational Being must necessarily entertain the

same conviction, and that he is positive of the absolute validity of this fact, both as regards the infinite variety of angles and the infinite variety of rational Beings, we shall proceed with him to the following reflections :

You affirm, then, to have acquired a *knowledge* by the aforementioned representation, a firmness, and unshakable stability of this representation, on which you can repose immutably, and are sure that you can repose so forever. Now tell me, on what is this knowledge really based? what is this its firm standpoint, and what this its unchangeable object? To begin with :

Our reader had just been constructing a certain angle, of a certain number of degrees, by certain side lines of a certain length. Thereupon he drew, once for all, the third line, and in drawing it declared, once for all, that all further attempts to draw another straight line between the two points would always result only in reproducing the same one line.

In that instance of drawing a line, the reader must therefore have abstained from viewing it as a *present* instance; he must have considered that it was not the present act of drawing a line, but the drawing of a line under these particular conditions—i. e. for the purpose of closing this particular angle—and in its infinite continuability, which he surveyed at one glance; and he must really have viewed it thus, if his assertion is to have any foundation. Again: the reader pretended to know that this assertion of his did apply not only to the present angle, which he had just constructed, but to all the infinite number of possible angles. He must therefore have reflected not on the drawing of a line to close *this* angle, but generally on the drawing of a line to close *any* angle, and he must have surveyed this act of his, in its possible and infinite variety, at one glance, if the assertion of his knowledge in this matter is to have any foundation. Again: this assertion of his was to be valid, not merely for him, but for all rational Beings who could but understand his words. He could therefore in nowise have reflected on himself, as such a particular person, nor on his own individual judgment; but he must have surveyed the judgment of all rational Beings, looking out from his soul into the souls of all rational Beings, if his assertion of the pretended knowledge is to have any foundation. Lastly :

the reader, having joined all these facts together in his mind, asserts to *know* of them, thus confessing that he will not change his judgment of them in all eternity, and making of this, his momentary assertion, an assertion for all time to come as well as for the whole past—if in the past he should ever have had occasion to judge on this matter;—he, therefore, does not regard his judgment on this subject as one of the present moment, but he surveys the judgment of himself and of all other reasoning Beings on this subject for all time, i. e. absolutely timeless, if the assertion of his pretended knowledge is to have any foundation. In one word: the reader claims for himself the power of surveying at one glance *all representation*—of course, of the object we have applied it to. Now, nothing prevents us from leaving unnoticed the fact, that in the quoted example it was the representation of a line between two points, which was surveyed at one glance; and we are consequently justified in asserting the result of our investigation to be contained in the following, merely formal, sentence: To the reader, who has answered our several questions, there is a knowledge; and this knowledge consists in the surveying at one glance a certain power of representing—or, as we would rather say, Reason, but this word is to have no other meaning here than it can necessarily have in this connection,—in its totality. Nothing, we say, can prevent us from making this abstraction, provided we do not thereby intend to extend the result of our investigation, but leave it entirely undecided whether the one case we have quoted is the only object of knowledge, or whether there are still other such objects.

REMARKS.—Such an absolute gathering together and taking in at one glance of a manifold of a representing (which manifold will most probably turn out to be at the same time always of an infinite character), as we have described in the above construction of knowledge, is, in the following treatise, and in the Science of Knowledge generally, termed *contemplation*. In that construction, we have found that knowledge has its basis and consists only in contemplation.

To this uniting consciousness is opposed the consciousness of the particular, which in the above illustration we found exemplified in the *present* drawing of a line between the two

points of an angle. This consciousness we may call perception or experience. It has appeared that in knowledge mere perception must be abstracted from.\*

§ 2. *Description of the Science of Knowledge as a knowledge of Knowledge.*

The Science of Knowledge is, as the term shows, a science, a theory of knowledge, which theory is doubtless based on a knowledge of Knowledge, generates knowledge, or in one word, is this knowledge. This knowledge of Knowledge is first, as the words indicate, a knowledge in itself, a taking in of the manifold at one glance.

It is, again, a knowledge of Knowledge. In the same manner as the above described knowledge of the line-drawing between two points is related to the infinitely varying possible cases of such line-drawing, is the knowledge of Knowledge related to any particular knowledge. Knowledge, therefore, presents the view of a manifold, which the knowledge of Knowledge takes in and surveys at one glance.

Or, still more clear and distinct: In all knowledge of the drawing of a line, the relation of the sides of a triangle, or whatever other descriptions of knowledge there may be, this knowledge, in its absolute identity *as knowledge*, would be the real seat and centre of the *knowledge of* line-drawing, relation of the sides of a triangle, &c. In it and its unity we would know of everything, however different it otherwise might be, only in the same manner; but of knowledge, as such, we should know nothing, precisely because we should know not of knowledge, but of the line-drawing, &c., in question. There would be a knowledge, and it would know because it would be; but it would know nothing of itself just because it would merely be. But in the *knowledge of Knowledge* this knowledge itself would be surveyed as such at one glance, and, therefore, as a unity in itself; just as the line-drawing, &c., was regarded, in our knowledge of it, as a unity

\* It is therefore an evidence of boundless stupidity when some one asks to tell him how we can know anything except through perception (experience). Through experience we can know nothing at all, since the merely experienced must be thrown aside first in order that we may arrive at a knowledge.

in itself. In the knowledge of Knowledge, knowledge steps out of itself, and places itself before its own eye, in order to be reflected upon.

It is evident that knowledge must be able thus to seize, contemplate, examine, and comprehend itself, if a Science of Knowledge is to be possible. Now it is true, that we might even here from the reality of the consciousness of men deduce a proof, although an indirect one, of the reality and consequently of the possibility of such a knowledge. But the direct proof of it is the reality of the Science of Knowledge, and of this every one can become convinced by realizing it within himself. Relying on this proof by fact, which our present attempt will furnish, we can abstain from all other preliminary proofs, especially as we have commenced this factical proof already by the mere writing down of our § 1.

### § 3. *Deductions.*

1. According to the above, all knowledge is contemplation (§ 2). Knowledge of Knowledge, therefore, being itself knowledge, is contemplation; and being a knowledge of Knowledge, is a contemplation of all contemplation—the absolute uniting of all possible contemplation into one.

2. The Science of Knowledge being this knowledge of Knowledge, is therefore no system or collection of axioms, no plurality of truisms, but altogether one undivided contemplation.

3. Contemplation is itself absolute knowledge—firmness, unwavering stability, and immutability of our representation; but the Science of Knowledge is an undivided survey of all such contemplation. It is therefore itself absolute knowledge, and, as such, firmness, unshakableness, immutability of our judgment (§ 1). Consequently, whatever appertains to the Science of Knowledge cannot be disproved by any reasoning Being; it cannot be contradicted, it cannot be doubted; since no disproving, no contradiction, no doubt is possible except through this science, and is therefore far below this science. So far as individuals are concerned, this science can meet only one difficulty: some men may not possess it.

4. Since the Science of Knowledge is only the contemplation of knowledge (a knowledge of line-drawing, &c.)—which latter

has been and must be presupposed to exist independently of such science—it is evident that this science can open no new and particular branch of knowledge made possible only by it, no material knowledge (no knowledge of something). This science can be nothing but the universal knowledge, which has come to know of itself, and has entered a state of light, consciousness and independence in regard to itself. This science is not an *object* of knowledge, but simply a *form* of the knowledge of all possible objects. This science must on no account be considered as an external object, but as our own tool; our hand, our foot, our eye; and not even our eye, but only the clearness of the eye. The teacher makes it objective merely to the student, who does not yet possess it, and only until he possesses it; for the student's sake only is it explained by words; whereas whoever does possess it, speaks no more of it, but lives and acts it in his other knowledge. Strictly speaking, no one *has* this science, but *is* it; and no one has it until he has become it.

5. The Science of Knowledge is, as we have said, a contemplation of that general knowledge which needs not to be first acquired, but which must be presupposed to exist in every Being, gifted with reason, and which, in fact, constitutes such rational Being. This science is, therefore, the easiest and plainest that possibly can be. To attain it, nothing further is necessary than to turn our reflection upon our self, and to cast a clear glance into our inner Being. The fact that mankind has gone astray in search of this knowledge for so many centuries, and that the present age, to which it has been submitted, has not understood it, proves only that men have heretofore paid more attention to everything else than to their own self.

6. Now, although the Science of Knowledge is not a system of axioms, but an undivided contemplation, it may nevertheless be possible that the unity of this contemplation is not in itself an absolute simplicity, a first element, atom, monad, or whatever else you may call this first thought (perhaps because such a thing does not exist in knowledge or anywhere else); but an *organic* unity, a variety melted together into unity, and this unity diffused at the same time into variety and an undivided unity. In fact, this appears to be the case when we

remember merely that this contemplation is to be a contemplation of all the manifold contemplations, of which latter each one is again to contain an infinite variety of instances.

7. Now, if this should turn out to be the case, it might be possible, also, that we should be unable—not in our presupposed possession of this science, but in its demonstration to others, who are presumed not to possess it—to present this unity to the student in a direct manner. We might see ourselves compelled to cause this unity to organize itself from out of one or the other of the various instances, and then to disorganize it again into these, making the student a witness of this process. It is clear that, under such circumstances, the one instance selected from which to start the organization could not be understood by itself, since by itself it would be nothing; being something only as a part of an organized unity and comprehensible only in this unity. In this manner we could, therefore, never gain admittance into the Science of Knowledge; or if it were possible, and if such an isolated instance could be made clear to the student, it could be done only if the contemplation of this isolated instance should turn out to be accompanied—although in an indistinct and to us unconscious manner—by the contemplation of the whole unity; the isolated instance having its resting-point in this unity, and receiving from it its distinctness and comprehensibility, while at the same time imparting to this unity a peculiar distinctness of its own, when connected with it. Thus it would also be with all subsequent instances, to be taken into consideration. Still more: the first instance would not only throw a peculiar light on the second instance, but at the same time the second instance would reflect back a peculiar light on the first one; since this receives its complete distinctness from the Whole, of which the second instance is a part. In the same way the third instance would not only be illuminated by the first one, but would reflect back upon both preceding ones its own peculiar light; and thus on to the end. In the course of our investigation, each part would consequently be explained by all others, and all others by each particular instance. All investigated parts would have to be kept in mind, since with each step forwards we should get a new view not merely of the new instance, but of all others and *from* all others; and no

instance would be completely explained until all the others had been explained, and until the one clear view, by which all the variety is united into one and the one re-diffused into the variety, had been obtained. The Science of Knowledge would consequently—in spite of the successive demonstration adopted by us—remain the same one and undivided view, which—from the zero of distinctness in which it merely exists, but is unconscious of itself—is elevated in a successive and straightforward manner to that point of clearness and perspicuousness in which it is thoroughly conscious of itself and lives in itself; thus confirming anew what has already been seen, that the Science of Knowledge does not consist in an acquisition or a production of something new, but in illuminating and making perspicuous that which always has been and always has been *ourselves*.

We might add historically, that the method of the Science of Knowledge is really as we have here presumed it to be, and that it is consequently fixed for all time to come. This science is not a drawing of conclusions in a simple, straight line, from some starting-point or other—a proceeding which is possible only in a presupposed lower organism of knowledge, but of no use whatever in Philosophy (being, on the contrary, positively ruinous to it),—but a drawing of conclusions from and to all sides at one and the same time; from a central point to all other points and from all other points back again to the central point, just as in an organic body.

## Part II.

### ON ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE.

#### § 1. *Concerning the conception of Absolute Knowledge.*

In order to pave a way for our investigation, let us first premise that the very conception of *knowledge* precludes all suspicion of its being the *Absolute* itself. For every second word added to the expression, the Absolute, destroys the conception of absoluteness, as such, and makes that word a mere adjective of the noun to which it becomes affixed. The Absolute is not knowledge, nor is it Being, nor is it identity or indifference of these two terms; it is simply and only the Absolute. But as we can never advance in the Science of Knowledge—and per-

haps in all other possible knowledge—beyond knowledge, this science cannot take its starting-point from the Absolute, but must commence with absolute knowledge. The question, how, under these circumstances, we are nevertheless able to assign to the Absolute its place beyond and independent of absolute knowledge—or, at least, to *think* it thus—as we have just now done, and how we could describe it, as we did, will undoubtedly be answered in the course of our investigation. It is possible that the Absolute enters our consciousness (is thought by us) only in the above connection with knowledge—or, as the *form* of knowledge.

The same question in regard to the possibility of thinking the Absolute, which we have just raised, can undoubtedly be objected to the thinking of absolute knowledge, i. e. if it should appear that all our real and possible knowledge is never an absolute, but, on the contrary, always a relative knowledge, limited or determined in a particular manner, and might be answered similarly: that this absolute knowledge can be revealed and is revealed to our consciousness only as the *form*, or, from another point of view, as the material part, or the object of real knowledge. This is the reason why we, having the intention of describing this absolute knowledge, and therefore undoubtedly persuaded that we know something about it, must for the present leave the question undecided how we ever came into possession of this our real knowledge of absolute knowledge. Perhaps we also view it, although as absolute, yet at the same time as never otherwise than in a relation, i. e. in its relation to all relative knowledge. In the description we are about to attempt, we can trust only to the direct contemplation of the reader, and must be content with asking him whether this description will call up in his mind what to him appears and forces itself upon his conviction as absolute knowledge. Or, if even this self-contemplation should desert him, we must wait and see whether in our succeeding paragraphs a light may not break upon his mind in regard to this first point.

## § 2. *Formal and Word-definition of Absolute Knowledge.*

Even if we should be compelled to content ourselves with the fact, which everyone will admit, that all our real know-

ledge is a knowledge of something—*this* something, and not that or the other something—yet every one of our readers will undoubtedly be able to understand, that there could be no knowledge of something if there were no knowledge pure and simple. So far as knowledge is a knowledge of something, it is a different knowledge in every other something of which it knows; but so far as it is knowledge pure, it is the same in all knowledge of something; and always altogether the same, although this knowledge of something might be extended into infinity, and consequently present an infinite difference. Now it is this knowledge, as the one and the same in all particular knowledge, to the thinking of which the reader is invited when we speak of absolute knowledge.

Let us make this thought, which we wish the reader to form, still more distinct by a few additional remarks:—It is not a knowledge of something, nor is it a knowledge of nothing (which would make it a knowledge of something, this something being nothing); it is not even a knowledge of itself; it is altogether no knowledge *of*; nor is it *a* knowledge (quantitative and in shape of a relation), but it is *the* knowledge (absolutely qualitative). It is no act, no fact, no something *in* knowledge, but it is simply that knowledge in which alone all acts and facts which can take place are contained. What use we can, nevertheless, make of this knowledge, the reader must wait to see. It is not opposed to the something of which is known, for in that case it would be the knowledge of something, or this particular knowledge itself; but it is opposed to the *knowledge of something*.

Some one, however, might say that this conception of knowledge pure and simple is after all nothing but an *abstraction* from all the particular of knowledge. To such an objection we must, of course, admit that in the *course of our actual consciousness* we are elevated to a *particular consciousness* of the absolute one and the same in all particular knowledge only by a free depression and subjection (generally called abstraction) of the particular character of a particular knowledge; although there may be another way by which to attain this consciousness, and although this may be the very way we intend to lead the reader. But what we protest against is, that this abstraction be supposed to produce from a multitude of

particulars what is contained in no single one of these particulars; and that such an objection should hold, that that character of knowledge, which every particular knowledge is presupposed to have, is on no account to be presupposed for the possibility of each single, particular knowledge, but enters knowledge only after a number of instances of knowledge have taken place, making then a knowledge what was previously a particular knowledge, although it never was *knowledge*.

§ 3. *Real definition of Absolute Knowledge—Description of the Absolute Substance of Knowledge.*

The real definition of absolute knowledge can be given only by demonstrating this knowledge through immediate contemplation. The reader must not believe that we can arrive at the nature of this absolute knowledge by drawing conclusions in a logical chain of reasoning; for, since this knowledge is to be absolute, there can be no higher, no more absolute point from which our logical chain of reasoning could start. We can form a conception of absolute knowledge only by a likewise absolute contemplation.

It is also apparent that such an absolute contemplation of absolute knowledge, and consequently the real definition of the latter, must be possible if a Science of Knowledge is to be possible; for the contemplation which forms the Science of Knowledge is to survey at one glance all reason and knowledge. The *particular* knowledge, however, cannot be surveyed at one glance, but requires particular glances, each one differing from the other. Knowledge must, therefore, be contemplated from that point of view in which it is one and the same knowledge, i. e. absolute knowledge.

In the description itself we shall assist the reader by the following introduction. Let the reader endeavor to think the Absolute itself, as such. Now, we affirm that he can think it only under these two conditions: 1st, as being *what* it is—reposing within and upon itself, without change or alteration, firm and complete of itself; 2d, as being *what* it is for no other reason than *because* it is—of itself, by itself, without any foreign influence; for everything foreign must vanish when we speak of the Absolute.

(It is possible that this duplicity of conditions, wherewith we designate the Absolute, being unable to designate it in any other manner—a fact rather curious, considering that we are speaking of the Absolute—may be in itself a result of our mode of thinking, as a knowledge; but this we must leave undecided for the present.)

The first condition we can term absolute rest, Being, a state of repose, &c.; the second, absolute change, or Freedom. Both expressions are to signify no more than is contained in the contemplation of the two characteristics of the Absolute, which we have asked the reader to undertake.

Now, knowledge is to be absolute, one and always the same knowledge, the unity of one and the highest contemplation, a mere absolute Quality. The two characteristics of the Absolute, therefore, which we have distinguished from each other above, must unite and become one in knowledge, so as to be no longer distinguishable; and this absolute union of both must constitute the real nature of knowledge, or the absolute knowledge.

I say, the melting together and close union of both into an indivisible unity, by which each part resigns and loses altogether its distinguishing characteristic, and both together form only one and an entirely new One, consequently their *real* union and true organization forms absolute knowledge; but on no account their mere co-existence, concerning which nobody is able to comprehend how they can co-exist with each other, and which would form a mere formal and negative unity; a non-diversity, which could after all (God knows for what reasons) be only postulated, but could never be proved. You must not understand it as if Being and Freedom entered into any particular, consequently presupposed, knowledge, and there uniting formed absolute knowledge by their union, thus constituting another knowledge within the first one. But *beyond* all knowledge, Freedom and Being unite, mix with each other, and this union and identity of both into a new being alone constitutes knowledge, as knowledge, as an absolute *Tale*. Everything depends on understanding this properly, and the neglect to so understand it has caused an infinity of errors.

But it might be asked, how we, who undoubtedly are also

gifted only with knowledge, can undertake seemingly to go beyond all knowledge and construct knowledge itself out of a non-knowledge; or, in other words, how the contemplation of the absolute knowledge, to which we have invited the reader in our demonstration, and which can also be surely only a knowledge, is at all possible—a possibility, however, which we have shown above to be the condition of the possibility of the Science of Knowledge;—and again, how we could undertake to describe this contemplation, or this knowledge, as a non-knowledge, as we have done. The answer to these questions will be found as we proceed. This continual referring to our further progress arises from the peculiar method of the Science of Knowledge, as demonstrated before. A clearness is wanting, which can be found only in a second link of our argument.

It must be considered, however, that the absolute knowledge has here been described simply so far as its *substance* is concerned. Being and Freedom, we have said, *unite* together; *they*, therefore, are the active, if we can speak of anything active in this connection; and are active for the very reason that they are not yet knowledge, but simply Being and Freedom. But as they unite and give up their separate existence in order to form a unity, a knowledge, they are mutually connected with each other; for only thus do they form knowledge; separately they are merely Being and Freedom, and rest now in a state of repose. This is what we term the *substance* of the absolute knowledge, or the absolute substance of knowledge. It is possible that this absolute substance holds the same relation towards the absolute form of the same knowledge which Being holds to Freedom in the absolute substance itself.

#### § 4. *Real Definition of Absolute Knowledge continued—Description of the Absolute Form of Knowledge.*

Not the inactive Being is knowledge, we said above, neither is it Freedom, but the absolute union and fusion of both into one is knowledge.

Hence it is this union, regardless of what it is, that thus unites, which constitutes the absolute form of knowledge. Knowledge is a For-itself-and-in-itself Being, an inner life and

organic acting power. This its being what it is for its self is the light of life and the source of all appearances in the light; it is the substantial inner sight, as such. We do not wish you to believe, that in *knowing* an *object* you draw a distinction between your consciousness (*of* this object) as the subjective, and the object itself as the objective; but we wish you to understand fully and be convinced in your innermost soul that both of these are One and a mutual *Uniting*, and that only after and by reason of this *Uniting* you are enabled to draw a distinction between both. You must be convinced that you do not tie both together, after their dissolution, by a string, which you know not where to get, but that both are and must be organically melted together and united before you *can* divide them.

Or, think again the Absolute as it has been described above. It is simply what it is, and is this simply because it is. But this definition still leaves the Absolute without the power of looking upon itself; and if you demand, *for whom* it is—a question which will occur to you very naturally, and which you will understand immediately when put by another person—you will vainly search for an eye to look upon the Absolute outside of the Absolute. But even should we grant you this eye, which we cannot do, you would never be able to *explain* the connection between it and the Absolute, however loudly you might assert such connection. This eye (this being what it is for its own self) is not outside of the Absolute but within the Absolute, and is the inner life, the organic self-penetration (-comprehension) of the Absolute itself.

Science has given to this absolute within itself moving life, and being what it is for itself, the only appropriate name which seemed to express the idea: *Egohood*. But if the inner eye of any one of our readers is not gifted with the freedom to look away from all outside objects and fix itself wholly upon his self, all explanations and proper expressions will be of no avail in making us understood. Such a reader will misinterpret every new word we might add. He is blind and will remain so.

If, as appears from the above, *this being-for-itself* constitutes the real inner nature of knowledge, as knowledge (as an inner life of light, and inner sight), the nature of knowledge

must necessarily consist in a *form* (a form of Being and Freedom, i. e. of their absolute uniting), and all knowledge must consequently be *formal* in its real nature. And that which we have termed in the preceding section the absolute substance of knowledge—and which will perhaps remain altogether the absolute substance, as substance—appears to us here, where we have given to knowledge its independent existence, as a *form*, i. e. a form of knowledge.

§ 5. *Union of the Absolute Form and the Absolute Substance in Knowledge.*

A. Knowledge is absolute ; it is *what* it is, and *because* it is. For it is only by the uniting and melting together of separates—whatever these separates may be—but on no account by the separates in their separateness that knowledge arises. Being knowledge, it, of course, cannot transcend its own sphere, for, if it did, it would cease to be knowledge ; nothing can exist for knowledge but itself. It is, therefore, absolute for itself, and comprehends itself, and begins as real formal knowledge (a condition of light and inner sight) only in so far as it is absolute.

But we have said that as knowledge it is simply the melting together of separates into a unity ; and—let it be well remarked—this unity is within itself and according to its nature—whatever other unities may be—a melting together of separates, and no other act of unity.

Now, all knowledge begins with this thus characterized unity, which constitutes, in fact, the absoluteness of knowledge, and can never transcend it, or throw it aside, without destroying itself. This unity extends, therefore, as far as knowledge extends, and knowledge can never arrive at any other unity than a unity of separates.

In other words, we have here deduced the assertion of § 1, that all knowledge is the gathering together and reviewing at one glance of a manifold ; and we, moreover, have shown the infinity of this manifoldness, the infinite divisibility of all knowledge, about which we could learn nothing from the mere fact developed in § 1, but had to arrive at through a deduction of the absolute ; and this infinite divisibility is deduced from the absolute character of knowledge, which is *formal*.

Whatever your knowledge may grasp is unity: for knowledge exists and contemplates itself only in unity. But when you now again endeavor to grasp (comprehend) this knowledge, the unity of it will at once dissolve itself into separates; and the moment you try to seize one of these separates—of course, as a unity, since no other way is possible—this one separate part will likewise dissolve into a manifold, and so on, until you cease to divide. When you do cease, you have a unity which is a unity only because you pay no further attention to it. Now keep in mind that this infinite divisibility is within yourself, owing to the absolute form of your knowledge, which you cannot transcend, and which you contemplate—though without a clear consciousness of this fact—whenever you speak of infinite divisibility. Let it, then, nevermore be said by you that this infinite divisibility might have its cause in a *thing per se*, an object of your senses—which, if it were true, would only be confessing that you found it impossible to discover its cause—since this cause has been pointed out to you as existing in your own knowledge, the only possible source thereof, where you can find it whenever you turn your eye with a clear and earnest glance upon your inner self.

But it must be well remembered that knowledge does on no account consist in the *Uniting*, or in the *Dividing*, each by itself, but in the union of both, in their melting together and real identity; for there is no unity without separates, nor are there separates without a unity. Knowledge can never take its start from the consciousness of first elements, which you might possibly put together to a unity; for all your knowledge cannot arrive in all eternity to a consciousness of first elements; nor can it start from a unity, which you might perhaps divide into parts to suit your fancy, conscious that you could pursue your dividing into infinity; for you have no other unity than a unity of separates. Knowledge, therefore, balances *between both*, and is destroyed if it does not balance between both. The character of knowledge is *organic*.

B. Knowledge is not the Absolute, but it is absolute as knowledge. Now the Absolute, when regarded as in a state of repose, is simply what it is. What knowledge *is* in this regard, what its absolute essence, its unchanging *substratum* is, we have seen in the preceding section. But the Absolute

is, moreover, when regarded as in a state of progress or freedom—and it must be considered thus in order to be considered as the Absolute—what it is, simply *because* it is. The same must hold good in regard to knowledge.

It is clear that knowledge, in so far as it is not mere knowledge, but *absolute* knowledge, does not remain closed up within itself, but rises above itself, looking down upon itself from above. We shall not attempt at present to justify the possibility of this new reflection, which is after all self evident, since knowledge is an absolute *For-itself*. The deduction of this reflection, with all the consequences arising therefrom, we shall leave to the future.

But it will perhaps be well to remark, in order to throw all possible light on our subject, that this freedom of knowledge to reflect upon its own nature was silently taken into our calculation in the preceding division, and alone made it possible for us to demonstrate what we did. We said: "Knowledge is a For-itself for-itself, and can, therefore, never go beyond the unity of separates, and consequently can never go beyond the separates." Now there we had to presume, for the mere sake of making ourselves understood, that knowledge was not confined within itself, but had the faculty of expanding itself into the infinite.

But, furthermore, knowledge is as knowledge only for itself and within itself: hence, it can be only for itself because it is; and as knowledge it is because it is only in so far as it is this for-itself (not for any foreign and outside object), but internally for itself; or, in other words, because it posits itself as *being because it is*. Now this *being because it is* is not a characteristic derived from the absolute Being of knowledge (its state of unchanging repose), like the Being described in the preceding section, but is derived from the *Freedom* and from the *absolute Freedom* of knowledge. Whatever, therefore, is understood by and derived from the character of this absolute Freedom does not result from the *Being* of knowledge; this Being might even be possible without it, if knowledge were possible without it. This character, if it is, is simply because it is; and if it is not, simply because it is not; it is the production of the absolute *Freedom* of knowledge, which is under no law, rule or foreign influence, and is itself this absolute Free-

dom. From this point of view the reader must consider what we have just said; not as if we had intended to deduce this Freedom from something else—as we did in the case of the Being of knowledge, which we composed out of the union of the two predicates of the Absolute—but that we absolutely posit it as the inner immanent absoluteness and Freedom of knowledge itself. So much in regard to the formal part of this character of Freedom in knowledge.

Now, as far as its *substance* is concerned: “A knowledge is within and for itself because it is,” means: an absolute act of knowledge is taken—of knowledge, the *For-itself-Being*; consequently, an act of self-comprehension, or of the absolute *generation* of the *For-itself-Hood*;—and this act is regarded as the ground (cause) of all Being in knowledge. Knowledge is, simply, because it is, for me; and it is not for me, if it is not. An act it is, because it is *Freedom*; an act of *Egohood* of the *For-itself*, because it is Freedom of knowledge; *unity*, an altogether indivisible point of self-penetration in an indivisible point, because here only the act as such is to be expressed, and on no account a Being (of knowledge, of course) which alone involves the manifold, but which here belongs to the grounded and must therefore be carefully separated from the ground. An inner living point, absolute stirring up of life and light in itself and from out of itself.

### Part III.

#### ON INTELLECTUAL CONTEMPLATION.

##### § 1. *Union of Freedom and Being in Absolute Knowledge through Thinking.*

A. We have considered absolute knowledge in regard to its inner, immanent character—i. e. with abstraction from the Absolute itself—as absolute Being, and in regard to its inner, immanent generation as absolute Freedom. But the Absolute is neither the one nor the other, but both as a unity; in knowledge, at least, does this duplicity mingle into a unity. But, even apart from this, the absoluteness of knowledge is not absoluteness itself, as the term shows, but is the absoluteness of knowledge; existing therefore, since knowledge is for itself, only for knowledge, which is not possible unless its duplicity

melts together into a unity. There must consequently be within knowledge itself, as sure as it is knowledge, a point where the duplicity of its absolute character unites into unity. This point of union we shall now turn our attention to, having sufficiently described the separates.

At least one of the separates, which we have to unite with the other in knowledge, is the inner Freedom of knowledge. The higher point of union, which we are now to describe, is, therefore, founded on absolute Freedom of knowledge itself, presupposes it, and is possible only under such presupposition. From this reason alone, therefore, is it already evident that this point of union is itself a production of absolute Freedom, and cannot be derived, but must be absolutely posited; it is, if it is, simply because it is; and if it is not, simply because it is not. So much in regard to its outward form.

Again: the presupposition in the absolute reflection of the Freedom of knowledge, described in the preceding section, is, that all knowledge emanates from it as its first source; that, consequently, since Freedom is unity, we must start from the unity to arrive at a manifold. Only by this presupposition of the self-reflection of freedom is the higher uniting reflection (of which we speak now) made possible; but with the first we necessarily have the absolute possibility of the latter. Resting directly upon and emanating from unity, this higher reflection is therefore in its purest essence nothing but an inner *For-itself-existence* of this unity, which is possible in knowledge simply because it is possible, but possible only through Freedom.

(This reposing in the unity and inner for-itself-life, which has been shown to arise only from the exercise of the absolute Freedom of knowledge, is what is usually termed *thinking*. The moving in the manifoldness of the separates is, on the contrary, a *contemplation*. This we mention merely to define the meaning of these two words. But it must be remembered that knowledge does repose neither in the unity nor in the manifoldness, but within and between both; for neither thinking nor contemplation is knowledge, but both in their union are knowledge.)

Again: This uniting reflection presupposes plainly a Being, i. e. the Being of the separates, which are to be united; and

this Being the reflection holds and carries within itself, in so far as it unites them; each, of course, *for itself* as a unity, a point, because the reflection emanates from thinking. In this regard the reflection is, therefore, not a free knowledge, as above, but a knowledge which carries its *Being* within itself; is, hence, *in so far* bound by the law of the Being of knowledge, the law of contemplation: unable ever to arrive at any other unity than a unity of separates. What the reflection *does* is unity, represented by a point; what it does not, but simply *is*, and carries within itself, by virtue of its nature, without any co-operation of its own, is manifoldness; and the reflection itself is *materialiter*, in its inner essence—without regard to the two outer links connected by it—the union of both. What, then, is this reflection? As an act, unity in knowledge, and for itself a *point* (a point in absolute emptiness, wherein it seizes and penetrates itself); as Being, manifoldness; the whole, therefore, a point extended to infinite separability, and yet remaining a point; a separability concentrated into a point, and yet remaining separability. Consequently a living and self-luminous form of line-drawing. In a line, the point is everywhere, for the line has no breadth. In a line, manifoldness is everywhere, for no part of the line can be regarded as a point, but only as a line in itself, as an infinite separability of points. I have said the *form* of line-drawing, for there is no length as yet—this it gets only by grasping and infinitely extending itself;—nor is there even a direction given, as we shall presently see; it is the absolute union of contradictory directions.

B. The uniting reflection is, in its true nature, the for-itself existence of absolute knowledge, its inner life, and eyesight. Let us consider this a little further.

Absolute knowledge is not Freedom alone, nor Being alone, but both; the uniting knowledge must consequently be based on Being, but without detriment to its inner unity; for it is a self-comprehension (penetration) of knowledge; but knowledge comprehends itself only in unity, and this unity, the ground-form of the present uniting reflection, must be preserved to it. Or let us represent the matter from another side and in a more exhaustive manner. The present reflection is the inner nature of knowledge itself, its self-penetration.

Now knowledge is never the *Absolute* itself, but only the melting together of the two attributes of the Absolute into One. Knowledge is consequently absolute only for itself, and in this absoluteness only secondary, but not primary. In this One, simply as such, with total disregard of the infinite separability of contemplation, our present reflection rests and penetrates the same; that is to say, penetrates the oneness and goes beyond it to the attributes of the Absolute, which are melted together in it. To say, therefore, this uniting knowledge is based on, or reposes in, Being, means the same as, it reposes in the Absolute. (This is, in reality, self-evident; for as this reflection is the for-itself existence of *absolute* knowledge, the whole absoluteness of *knowledge*, described above, must appear in it. It is consequently no longer a knowledge imprisoned within itself, as we have heretofore described it, but a knowledge seizing, encircling and penetrating its whole self; from which fact we derive a slight glimpse of the possibility seemingly to go beyond all knowledge, as we did in a previous paragraph. Our mode of doing so was founded on the act of knowledge, whereby it penetrates its own nature, and which we have here deduced. It is, of course, understood that the two attributes of the Absolute are viewed as a unity.)

Now there are two points of repose and turning-points in this reflection, in Being or in the Absolute. Either this reflection reposes on the character of absolute Freedom, which becomes Freedom of knowledge only through further determination, thus simply presupposing Freedom; views only the outward form, the act; and in this respect the absolutely free and, on that very account, empty basis of knowledge appears as comprehending and penetrating itself simply because it does so without any higher reason, and the therefrom arising Being or Absolute (of knowledge) is inner sight, a condition of light. The whole standpoint of this view is simply form, or Freedom of Knowledge, Egohood, Inwardness, Light.

Or it reposes on the character of absolute Being, thus simply presupposing an existence, but making this an existence of knowledge in and for itself; views consequently the inward character of this act of self-penetration, and is thereby forced to subjoin a dormant faculty of such an act to the act itself, a Zero in relation to the act capable of being converted

into a positive fact by simply an exercise of Freedom. The fact *that* the act takes place, in regard to the mere form, is to have its ground in Freedom, as heretofore; but the possibility that the act *can* take place is to have its ground in a Being, and in a Determined Being. Knowledge is not to be, as formerly, absolutely empty and to create light only through an exercise of Freedom, but it is to have the light absolutely within itself, and only to develop and seize it through Freedom. The standpoint of this view of the matter is absolute repose.

Let us now turn our attention to the inner essence of the reflection, as such. It is a for-itself existence of knowledge—which is itself a for-itself existence;—and through this view of the subject, which we have always kept in mind, we gain a double knowledge, one, *for* which the other is (in the contemplation the upper, or subjective), and one, which is for the other (in the contemplation the lower, or objective). Now, neither the one nor the other, nor consequently both, would be knowledge if both together did not unite, and thus form only one knowledge. Let us now view this organic uniting of the reflecting and the reflected in knowledge both in a general way, and especially as it is connected with our present investigation.

1. That which, in uniting, forms knowledge is always Freedom and Being. Now in the reflection, spoken of above, the upper, subjective, with its actual result within knowledge, is a uniting, consequently an act or Freedom of knowledge, which can change into a knowledge only by uniting with a Being of knowledge, closely connected with it. (The line which is to be drawn can occur as line in a knowledge only when drawn within a something itself fixed and unchanging.)

2. Whatever is in the immediate neighborhood of and connected with this act of uniting, is, according to the above, the standpoint of the uniting reflection, in the unity of the point, which standpoint may be a twofold one. In it knowledge appears as an unchangeable Being, a Being simply what it is; consequently, a remaining in the standpoint, on which it happens to rest, without faltering or changing, but on no account a balancing between both standpoints.

Now this uniting reflection, or thinking, must repose either in the first described standpoint of absolute Freedom;—and then

the line is drawn from this standpoint to that of Being; knowledge is regarded as simply its own cause, and all Being of knowledge and all Being for knowledge, i. e. as it appears in knowledge, as having its absolute ground in Freedom. (The material contents of the described line would be *illumination*.) The expression of this view of the matter would be: there is simply no Being (of course, for knowledge, since this view is based on the standpoint of knowledge) except through knowledge itself. (Nothing is to which Being is not given by knowledge.) We will call this line the *ideal*.

Or the reflection reposes on the last described standpoint of the unchanging, the permanent;—and then it describes its line from the point of absolute Being and condition of light to the development of the same through absolute Freedom (and the material of the line would be *enlightenment*). We will call this line the *real*.

But upon *one* of these standpoints the reflection would necessarily repose; and when reposing upon the one, not upon the other; and one of the two directions the line would necessarily receive, and then not the other.

REMARKS.—I. A knowledge which, through its connection with its branch-knowledge, is posited as being simply what it is, is a knowledge of *Quality*.

Such a knowledge is necessarily a *Thinking*, for only thinking reposes upon itself by virtue of its form of unity; contemplation, on the contrary, never arrives at a unity which cannot again be dissolved into separates.

The knowledge of quality, of which we have spoken *here*, is the absolute *for-itself*-existence of absolute knowledge itself. Beyond and outside of this no knowledge can penetrate. Now, qualities are only in knowledge; for the quality itself can be fixed, determined, only by knowledge. The two qualities here deduced, Being and Freedom, are consequently the highest and absolute qualities. This shows how we came to find them above as the not-to-be-united and no-further-to-be-analyzed qualities of *the Absolute*. The Absolute is probably nothing else than the union of the two first qualities in the formal unity of thought.

II. Let us consider the following sentences, which can be proved by the immediate contemplation of every one:

1. No absolute, immediate knowledge, except of Freedom; or immediate knowledge can know only of Freedom. For knowledge is unity of separates or opposites: but separates are united into unity only by absolute Freedom (a point which we have proved above, but which everybody can moreover convince himself of by immediate contemplation). Only Freedom is the first, immediate object of a knowledge. (In other words, knowledge starts only from self-consciousness.)

2. No immediate, absolute Freedom, except in and through a knowledge. Immediate, I say; a Freedom which is what it is, simply because it is; or negatively, which has no other ground of its determined character than itself (no such other ground, for instance, as natural instinct would be). For only such a Freedom can unite absolute opposites: but opposites are united only in a knowledge. (In Being or Determinedness of quality opposites exclude each other.)

3. Knowledge and Freedom are consequently inseparably united. Although we draw a distinction between them—how, why, and in what regard we can do this will appear in due course of time—they are in reality not to be distinguished at all, but are simply one and the same. A free and infinite life—a *For-itself*, which sees *its own* infinity—the *Being* and the *Freedom* of this light, melted together in the closest union: this is absolute knowledge. The free light, which sees itself as Being; the Being, which sees itself as free: this is the standpoint of absolute knowledge. These propositions are decisive for all transcendental philosophy.

4. If this has been understood, the question will arise, how and from what standpoint has it been understood? From what higher truth can it be demonstrated? Everyone who has understood the foregoing will reply: I understand and see that the nature of knowledge must be thus simply because I so understand it; this conviction expresses my original Being.

In the above we have consequently created an immediate contemplation of absolute knowledge within us; and in the present moment, wherein we become conscious of this fact, we have again created a contemplation (for-itself-existence) of this contemplation. The latter is the point of union important to us here.

§ 2. *Description of the Absolute Substance of Intellectual Contemplation as the For-itself of that Thinking.*

We now return to the first contemplation, as the object of ours. In that contemplation, a lower contemplation (view) of knowledge and a *Being* of this knowledge were united. To begin with the former :

1. No immediate knowledge except of Freedom. Here the inner form of knowledge was presupposed, and from this form a conclusion was drawn as to its possible exterior, its object. The point of view was in this form, and this form placed itself before itself as Freedom.

2. No absolute Freedom except in a knowledge. Here the form of Freedom was presupposed ; in it the contemplation rested and viewed itself as of necessity a knowledge.

In the first instance we had an absolute for-and-in-itself Being of knowledge, as real unity, dividing itself into an outer absolute multiplicity, founded on Freedom. Its reflex (For-itself existence) lies in the centre.

At present we have an immediate self-grasping of the outward unity (through Freedom) in the multiplicity and melting together of the same to the inner and real unity of knowledge. The uniting reflex is here also in the centre. (*Inner* and *outward* unity we use here merely as temporary expressions to make ourselves better understood until we can explain them.)

Now both is to be simply one and the same : absolute Freedom is to be knowledge, and absolute knowledge Freedom. Both are not *viewed* (contemplated) as One—as we have seen, since we always have to proceed from one of the two points of view to the other ;—but they are to *be* one. The middle and turning point, which we characterized above as the reflex of the absolute knowledge, is this one *Being* ; and thus it also appears how the two possible descriptions thereof are always merely descriptions of the same Being of absolute knowledge. Unity of this Being and its two descriptions is consequently the lower contemplation.

Let us now approach the real end of our investigation, and make this contemplation again its own object ; that is to say, not, let us make an object again of this object-making ; but rather, let us ourselves *be* in the following this very contem-

plation, which, as it is the contemplation of the absolute intellectualizing, may well be called *intellectual contemplation*.

We are it in the following manner:—In the above described contemplation, absolute knowledge evidently seizes (grasps) itself, in its absolute spirit, in an absolute manner. 1. It *has* itself from itself, in its absolute nature, in the unity: it is, precisely because it is knowledge, in its existence at the same time *for* itself. 2. It grasps, contemplates and describes itself in this contemplation in the above mentioned manner, as unity of Freedom and of knowledge, which latter is here viewed in a somewhat different manner, and no longer as absolutely *being*.

But for the very purpose of describing itself, it is necessary that it should possess itself *as* knowledge (as realized knowledge). Now, what sort of knowledge is this latter? We have sufficiently described it: a firm, in itself reposing, in and through itself determined (presupposing, in relation to its form, no Freedom, but itself presupposed by absolute *Freedom*) *thought* (act of life, of thinking) of the before-mentioned absolute identity of Freedom and Knowledge (the last expression used in its former and broader sense, as the pure form of the for-itself). This living thought is it which views itself in the intellectual contemplation, not as thought, but as knowledge; because the absolute *form* of knowledge (the for-itself existence, absolute possibility, to be in every Being at the same time the reflex thereof) which lies within it, realizes itself (in making this reflection) because it can so realize itself by virtue of the absolute formal Freedom of knowledge. Thus the thought views itself in this contemplation in an absolute (absolutely free) manner, according to its absolute Essence. This is sufficient so far as the substance of the intellectual contemplation is concerned. Now in regard to its *form*, whereby we in a certain manner keep it no longer within us, but make it an object of our reflection.

### § 3. *Description of the Absolute Form of Intellectual Contemplation as Original Act of Reflection.*

The thought, or knowledge, takes hold of itself with absolute Freedom. This presupposes a previous tearing itself away on the part of the thought from itself, in order to take hold of

itself again, and make itself its own object; presupposes an *emptiness* of absolute Freedom, in order to be *for* itself. Freedom creates itself, and precisely this gives us a duplicity of Freedom, which must be presupposed, however, for the act of intellectual contemplation (and generally for every reflection, in its infinite, ever higher rising possibility), and which consequently belongs to the original nature of knowledge. It is this not-being of absolute Freedom, in order to be, and to enter Being, which we here direct attention to. In the lower (objectivated) knowledge, Freedom *is* and Being *is*. Here both *is* not, but is *in progress of being*.

In this act knowledge stands revealed to itself: 1st, as *Freedom*, whereby it describes Being; and 2d, as *Being*, which is described. In this act *both* is for itself, and without the act neither would be; all would be blindness and death. Through this act Freedom actually becomes Freedom, which is at once apparent; and Thought becomes Thought, which is to be remembered. This act brings *visibility* and *light* into both; creates it within them. It is the absolute *reflection*: and the nature of this reflection is an ACT. (This is of infinite importance.)

No reflection, therefore, as an act, without absolute Being of knowledge; again, no Being (state of repose) of knowledge without reflection; for else it would be no knowledge, and would contain neither Freedom (*which is only in an act*, and receives its Being only through this act) nor Being of knowledge, which is only *for-itself*.

Thus both standpoints are united in this contemplation. Whether you deduce Being from Freedom, or Freedom from Being, the deduction is always the same from the same, only viewed in a different manner; for Freedom or Knowledge is *Being* itself, and Being is Knowledge itself, and there is positively no other Being. Both views are inseparably connected, and should they nevertheless be separated—the possibility of which we can as yet only partially comprehend—they will be only different views of one and the same.

This is the true spirit of transcendental Idealism. All Being is Knowledge, The foundation of the universe is not *anti-spirit*, *un-spirit*, the relation and connection of which with spirit we should never be able to understand, but is itself spi-

rit. No death, no lifeless matter; but everywhere life, spirit, intelligence: a spiritual empire, absolutely nothing else.

On the other hand, all knowledge, if it be a *knowledge*—how error and delusions are possible, not as *substantes* of knowledge, for that is impossible, but as *accidentes* thereof, we shall see in time,—is *Being* (posits absolute reality and objectivity).

Now to the whole of this absolute reflection there is presupposed a Being of Thought as well as of (in this place stationary and existing) Freedom; and here, also, the one is not without the other. At the same time there is in the lower knowledge likewise, as has been shown, Freedom and Being (i. e. possibility of reflection, and the pure, absolute Thought), and either is also not without the other, as above. Finally, the two connections of the same, the upper and the lower, are not without each other; and we thus arrive, when consciousness begins, at an inseparable *Fivefold*, as a perfect synthesis. In the centre of it, i. e. in the act of reflecting, the intellectual contemplation has its place, and connects both, and in both the branch-members of both.

#### § 4. *The Absolute Ego as Absolute Form of Knowledge.*

The intellectual contemplation stands in the centre and unites: what does this mean? Evidently, the (lower) Being is *at the same time* in and for itself, and illuminates and penetrates itself in this for-itself-existence. The contemplation, the free For-itself, is consequently essentially connected with it; and only both together are a knowledge; and otherwise Being would be blind. On the other hand, the (upper) contemplation—the free For-itself—is received into the form of repose and determinateness, and only in this union becomes a knowledge; for, in the other case, the Freedom of the For-itself would be empty and void, and would dissolve into nothingness. Thus knowledge is partly illuminating its Being, partly determining its For-itself (Light): the absolute identity of both is the intellectual contemplation, or the absolute form of knowledge, the pure form of the Ego. The *For* is only in the light; but it is at the same time a for-itself—a Being placed in the light before its own eye.

Here—which is very important—the intellectual contempla-

tion dwells within itself; it is inwardly a pure *For*, and nothing else. In order to illustrate this very abstract and in itself incomprehensible thought through its opposite (because this thought, as will soon be shown, is possible only with its opposite): an object, as *Ego* (intelligence) is above, for which there is a lower objective; but this latter is itself nothing but the upper *Ego* (intelligence). In the upper the contemplation reposes and is grounded; in the lower, Being reposes and has its ground: but both are connected in an Identity, so that, if you do think a duplicity—and you cannot think otherwise—you are forced to predicate of *each* the contemplation and the Being. In other words, there are in reality not two members, one upper and one lower, connected by a line, but the whole is one self-penetrating point; consequently, not only the *being*—one of two members, and a knowledge outside of both (as, for instance, the contemplation of an external object), but the contemplation of *their* identity in the form of one *knowledge*. This alone is real consciousness—a remark which it is necessary to make here not only for the sake of the pointedness and clearness of our whole system, but which will turn up again at a future period with a highly important consequence.

Until now we have mounted upwards, have left all the different degrees of our reflection, by which we mounted, behind us, and stand now on the highest point, in the absolute form of knowledge, the pure *For*. This *For*-itself-existence is an *absolute* *For*-itself, i. e. simply *what* and simply *because* it is, not deriving its being from another object. Its contemplation reposes, therefore, in itself for itself, which we have termed the form of thinking. It is consequently, as an absolute form of thinking, held within itself; but it does not hold itself. It is a stationary, closed, within-itself luminous eye. (There is, as we have already shown in another way, an *absolute*, qualitative, determined knowledge, which simply *is*, but is not made; and precedes all particular freedom of reflection, alone making it possible.)

In this thus closed eye, in which nothing foreign can penetrate, which cannot go beyond itself to something foreign, does our system rest; and this closedness (in-itself-completeness), which is founded on the inner absoluteness of knowledge, is the character of transcendental Idealism. Should it, neverthe-

less, seem to go beyond itself—as we certainly have hinted—it would have to go beyond itself by virtue of its own nature, and this *itself* it would then posit as its self only in a peculiar manner.

And now, since we have discovered the absolute form of knowledge to be simply For-itself, the reflection of the teacher of the Science of Knowledge, which heretofore was active and produced something, which was known only to *him*, withdraws altogether. His reflection is henceforth only passive; and vanishes, consequently, as something particular. Everything, which is to be hereafter demonstrated, lies within the discovered intellectual contemplation, the root of which is the *For-itself* of absolute Knowledge, and is but an analysis of the same; let it be understood, however, not in so far as it is regarded as a simple Being or Thing, in which case there would be nothing to analyze, but in so far as it is regarded as what it is, as knowledge. This contemplation is our own resting-point. Still, *we* do not analyze, but knowledge analyzes itself, and can do so because it is in all its knowledge a *For-itself*.

From this moment, then, we stand and repose in the Science of Knowledge—the object of the science, knowledge, having been determined. Heretofore we sought only to gain admittance into the science.

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## ANALYSIS OF HEGEL'S ÆSTHETICS.

Translated from the French of M. Ch. Bénard, by J. A. MARTLING.

### Part III.

V. POETRY.—Poetry, which is commonly considered as forming a separate domain, should form a part of the general system of the arts. Without it, in fact, this system is incomplete; for poetry is the last form of art, the most perfect and most general expression of the beautiful or the ideal. From another side, the nature of poetry, its laws, and the conditions which belong to it, can be well comprehended only when we